DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 471 281 PS 030 903

TITLE	Healthy Start, Grow Smart, Your Ten-Month-Old.
INSTITUTION	Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC.; Department of Education, Washington, DC.; Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	2002-00-00
NOTE	41p.; This publication was an initiative of Laura Bush as the First Lady of Texas and sponsored by the Texas Department of Health. Developed with Susan H. Landry and Craig T. Ramey.
AVAILABLE FROM	ED Pubs, P.O. Box 1398, Jessup, MD 20794-1398. Tel: 877-433-7827 (Toll Free); Fax: 301-470-1244; e-mail: edpubs@inet.ed.gov; Web site; http://www.ed.gov/pubs/edpubs.html; Web site: http://www.nochildleftbehind.gov.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom (055)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Child Health; Child Rearing; Child Safety; Childhood Needs; Cognitive Development; *Infant Care; *Infants; *Parent Child Relationship; Physical Development; Play

ABSTRACT

Distributed by the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Education, and Health and Human Services, this pamphlet provides parents with information and advice about their infants in the tenth month of life. Following a brief description of developmental characteristics at this age, the pamphlet offers advice on a variety of topics, including: guarding against poisons, nursing breaks, fears and tears, teeth cleaning, learning through play, educational toys, child safety, and guidance and discipline. The pamphlet concludes with a list of relevant information resources for families. (HTH)

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Healthy Start, Grow Smart

Your 10-Month-Old

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Your 10-Month-Old

Prepared by:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Education
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

2002

Acknowledgments

This publication was an initiative of Laura Bush as the First Lady of Texas and sponsored by the Texas Department of Health. President Bush and Mrs. Bush have asked that this series of booklets be revised and distributed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

We would like to thank the Texas Department of Health for their cooperation and assistance in bringing this publication to families across the United States. In addition, we recognize the contributions that Susan H. Landry, Ph.D., Craig T. Ramey, Ph.D. and many other individuals made in the development of this magazine.

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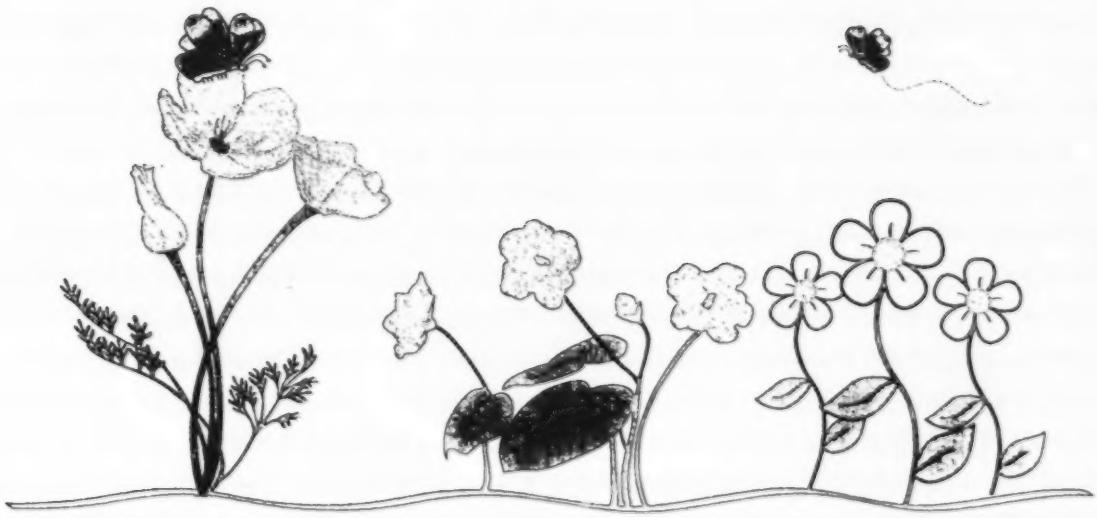


10 Months and Terrific

Ruby and Albert are excited by 10-month-old Jessica's new skills. This month there are so many! Jessica calls to her parents saying "Mama" or "Dada." She wants to feed herself at every meal. She sometimes drinks from a cup without spilling. She tries to pull herself up to stand. She likes to practice stepping sideways along the sofa. But she knows that she has to hold on to stay steady. Crawling still helps her get around the house in a hurry.

Jessica explores everything. She pulls pots and lids out of the kitchen cabinet. She drags clothes from the laundry basket. She scatters magazines everywhere. Everything is a toy that she learns from. When she was six months old, Jessica made friends with Rollo, the neighbor's dog. This month Rollo's loud bark scares Jessica. Now she cries and clings whenever Rollo is around.

Ruby and Albert know they have to move fast to stay ahead of Jessica. In this month's issue, you'll learn more about your baby. You'll learn more ways to help your baby grow, learn and stay safe and healthy.

Questions Parents Ask

Question

When I'm watching TV, my baby plays with the controls or bangs the screen. I tell her to stop, but she won't. What can I do?

Answer

At this age, babies are curious and want to try out everything. They also have short attention spans. They quickly lose interest in one thing and move to something else.

A TV is interesting to a baby. The controls are just the right size for tiny fingers. She can push or turn them. The screen is a dancing display of light and color. And the TV makes lots of noise.

A TV can also be a safety hazard. Some knobs can come off. If she puts a small one in her mouth, she might choke. Some TV sets are also top-heavy. If she bangs against the screen, the TV might topple over on her.

Telling her "No, no" again and again doesn't work. She's just starting to develop memory. So it's hard for her to remember that she is not allowed to play with the TV. And it's too interesting for her to ignore.

For safety, make sure the TV is sturdy and out of reach. You might put it on a high shelf or in a cabinet.

Often you can tell when she is about to play with the TV. She might start crawling toward it. Try to distract her before she gets there. Give her something else to play with. You know she is curious about controls, so give her a safe substitute.

Give her a "busy box." This is a toy with knobs, dials and other things she can move. Or you can make one from a cardboard box. Cut out large circles, squares and other shapes from cardboard. Attach them to the box with brads that spread out on the inside. Tape the box closed. Show her how to turn the shapes on the outside. Tape a clear plastic folder on one side of the box. Insert colorful pictures. Talk to your baby about the pictures.

Guard Against Poisons

Many home products can be poisonous. Here are a few:

- ☆ kitchen cleaners such as oven cleaner and dishwasher detergent
- ☆ general cleaners such as ammonia, furniture polish and bleach
- ☆ toilet bowl cleaner, drain cleaner and other bathroom products
- ☆ laundry products such as bleach, spot remover and fabric softener
- ☆ turpentine, kerosene, lighter fluid and charcoal lighter
- ☆ paint remover, paint thinner, paint and varnish
- ☆ products such as gasoline and antifreeze
- ☆ bath and beauty products such as makeup, nail polish remover and perfume
- ☆ bug spray, roach trays, rat poison and ant poison
- ☆ prescription and over the counter medicines such as aspirin, sleeping pills, laxatives and cough syrup
- ☆ vitamins, iron pills and other food supplements

If your child swallows any home product, get help right away. If your child is not breathing, phone 9-1-1. Otherwise, phone the Poison Control Center. The number is 1-800-222-1222.

Safety tips

Babies are curious by nature. At this age, they try to crawl everywhere. They may climb to get things they want. Protect your child against poisons. Here are some safety tips:

- ★ Watch your child at all times. Stay close and keep her out of danger.
- ☆ Lock poisons in cabinets.
- ☆ Store all home products out of reach.
- ★ Make sure all medicines have safety caps. These make it harder for children to take them off. But don't depend on safety caps alone. Given enough time, children can pry them loose.
- ☆ Don't leave medicine on the kitchen table or the bathroom sink. Keep all medicines out of reach.
- ★ Put away your purse and those of people who come to visit. Purses often contain medicines and other harmful products.
- ☆ Throw out old medicines. Check "Expiration Date" on the label. Flush old medicine down the toilet. Rinse out the container.
- ★ Keep products in the containers they came in. Don't pour gasoline into a soda pop bottle, for example. You don't want a child to mistake one for the other.
- ☆ Store harmful products away from foods.
- ☆ Get rid of any harmful products you don't need. It's better to discard a half can of paint thinner than to risk an accident. Call the garbage pickup agency. They have a special place for disposing of these products.

Growing Up with Plants

Plants add beauty to our homes. Plants and flowers are lovely in parks and gardens. But many plants can be dangerous. Poison ivy can cause a rash. Roses and some types of cactus have thorns. Some plants contain poison in the leaves, seeds or flowers. There are too many poisonous plants to name here. A few common ones are chinaberry, English ivy, lantana and oleander. Curious, crawling babies often want to play with plants.

Here are some plant safety tips:

- ☆ Know the name of every plant in and around your home. Find out which ones are poisonous.
- ☆ If you have houseplants, put them out of reach. Store seeds and bulbs where your child cannot get them.
- ☆ Remember that holiday plants can be poisonous. These include mistletoe, holly and poinsettia.
- ☆ Encourage your baby to smell flowers and leaves. But don't let her put them in her mouth.
- ☆ Don't eat wild plants, especially mushrooms.
- ☆ Don't make whistles, toys, garlands or wreaths from unknown plants.
- ☆ Learn to identify poison oak and poison ivy. Don't touch the leaves, stems, or roots.

What if your child gets into poison oak or poison ivy?

As soon as possible:

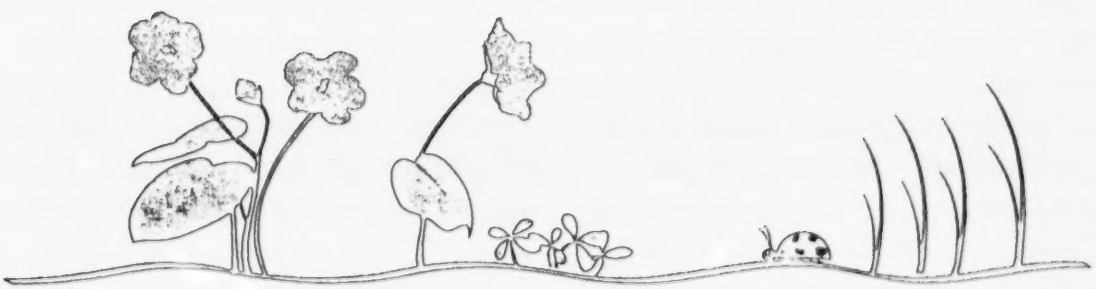
1. Take off all her clothes.
2. Wash her skin well with soap and water.
3. Wash the clothes and shoes with hot water and soap.

If she develops a rash, call your doctor.

Ten safe plants for your home

These 10 plants are not poisonous. But plants may cause different reactions in different people. So make sure your child does not try to eat them. Teach her to pet the leaves instead.

- ☆ African violet
- ☆ Begonia
- ☆ Boston fern
- ☆ Coleus
- ☆ Corn plant
- ☆ Jade plant
- ☆ Peperomia
- ☆ Rubber plant
- ☆ Spider plant
- ☆ Swedish ivy



Nursing Breaks

It is unusual for a baby to wean entirely on his own during the first year. But it's not unusual for a baby to take occasional nursing breaks. This is different from weaning. Natural weaning happens over several weeks or months. A nursing break is usually abrupt. Both you and the baby will be unhappy when such a break happens. Try to discover why your baby is unhappy nursing.

- ☆ Are you wearing a new perfume?
- ☆ Are you using a new soap?
- ☆ Are you stressed about work?
- ☆ Have you started menstruating again?
- ☆ Are you eating a new, spicy food?
- ☆ Have you started to smoke?

Some of these involve odors that can confuse your baby. They may make your milk taste different and unappealing. Sometimes a sick or teething baby refuses to breastfeed. When your baby feels miserable, not even nursing takes the hurt away.

There are things you can do to help your baby get back to breastfeeding. Rule out a medical reason for the nursing break. If you can identify something that your baby dislikes, try to change the product or behavior. If you can't identify the cause, try giving your baby more attention. Change your nursing position. Offer to nurse when your baby is relaxed or drowsy. Take some deep breaths before you nurse. Be patient. Most babies will return to their regular routine within a few days.

While your baby is on a nursing break, express your breast milk according to her old nursing routine. This will help prevent uncomfortably full breasts. It will also help maintain your milk supply. Offer your baby breast milk from a cup until she is ready to return to nursing. Milk from a cup will not satisfy her need to suck. This may encourage your baby to return to nursing more quickly.

You can express milk with a mechanical breast pump or your hands. It is easiest to learn to do this from a lactation specialist. Check with your doctor to get the name of someone who can help. As you learn, be patient with yourself. Remember breast milk is the best food you can give your baby.

To learn more about breastfeeding, you may want to contact your local health department, WIC clinic, hospital, La Leche League or doctor. You can call La Leche League at 1-800-LALECHE or visit their Web site at www.lalecheleague.org/.

Time To Eat

Protein is now an important part of your baby's diet. Foods like poultry, fish, beef, pork and beans are all good sources of the protein and iron your baby needs. Make sure the meat is well cooked. Chop or shred it into small pieces. Meats should be lean. Cut off all visible fat before serving it to your baby.

Food allergies

As you add new foods to your baby's diet, be on the lookout for allergic reactions. Gradually add cottage cheese, hard cheeses and yogurt to your baby's diet. These protein-rich foods are OK to use once in a while but they may cause an allergic reaction. You can also offer strained cooked egg yolk—a good source of iron. Avoid whole eggs and egg whites because they might also cause an allergic reaction. Save whole eggs for sometime after your baby's first birthday.

Introduce one food at a time. Wait a few days before trying another new food. If your baby has a reaction, stop offering the food. If there is no reaction, you can offer the same food again or try another new one.

Honey alert

Don't feed honey to your baby before her first birthday. Honey can contain bacteria that will make your baby sick.

Low appetite

Toward the end of her first year, you may notice that your baby is eating less. Her growth rate may be slowing. She also has lots of new and exciting activities that distract her from meals. Don't worry. Continue to offer healthy foods at set times. Trust your baby to eat as much as she needs. Remember, meal and snack times are best when they are pleasant and regular.

Finger foods can help encourage your baby to eat. They also foster your baby's growing independence. Offer foods like cooked macaroni, soft cooked vegetables, ripe peeled fruit slices, small slices of cheese, small pieces of bread and crackers.

Formula feeding

Continue to hold your baby on your lap when you give her a bottle of formula. Never prop the bottle or allow her to lie down when drinking. When she wants to get down, take the bottle away. Don't let her get into the habit of carrying the bottle around with her. Offer her water or juice from a cup.

Formula and juice contain sugar. Falling asleep with a bottle containing sugary liquids can cause tooth decay. This is called "baby bottle tooth decay." You can avoid it by not putting her to bed with a bottle. Instead of a bottle, give her a comforting blanket or toy to help her feel secure.

Time To Eat continued...

Practice makes perfect

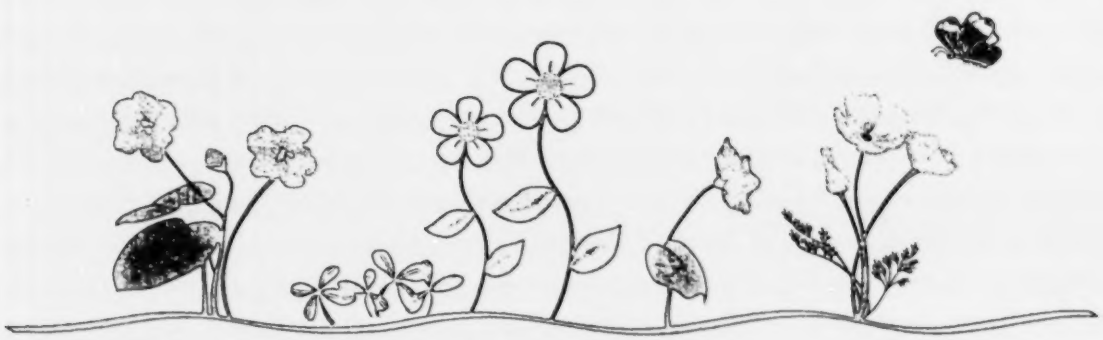
Give your baby a spoon to hold during her meals. Show her how to hold it, dip it into the food, and carry the food to her mouth. She'll probably need lots of practice. Serve foods that stay on the spoon easily such as applesauce, mashed potatoes and cooked cereal like oatmeal or cream of rice. Also give her foods she can pick up with her fingers. She's getting good at doing this, and it helps her develop motor control in her hands.

Family meals

Your baby is getting better at feeding herself. She is also more social and enjoys being with the rest of the family.

Introduce her to family meals. Give her most of her meal before the rest of the family is ready to eat. Then let her feed herself finger foods while the whole family enjoys a meal together. Turn off the TV. Include her in the family's conversation. Tell her about everyone's activities. Talk about the food. Encourage other family members to talk to the baby too.

Of course, a 10-month-old will not understand all the words you say. But she will understand that people enjoy each other's company. She'll learn that conversation is back and forth. Sometimes we listen and sometimes we talk. And she'll connect mealtime with being close to her loving family.



Fears and Tears

Your baby is mobile. She is aware of her surroundings. She has learned what is familiar—her family, her home and her toys. She also knows what is unfamiliar—a stranger, a sudden siren or a loud bark.

Give your baby comfort and reassurance. Say "Mari, what a loud noise. It's a fire engine. The noise tells people to get out of the way. I'm sorry it scared you. Let's hug until you feel better."

Your baby may be afraid of strangers. This is normal. It is called "stranger anxiety." This fear begins when your baby notices the differences among people. This is a big step in development. It means your baby is learning about her world and the people in it.

Some babies fuss, hide or cry when they are with unfamiliar people. When you visit a new place, give your baby time to adjust. Hold your baby and let her look around. Talk in a calm, soothing voice. Warn relatives and friends to go slowly. Let your baby make the first move. Your baby will relax before long. Sometimes her curiosity will overcome her shyness. She'll crawl out of your lap to explore something new.

Your fears

Try not to share your own fears with your baby. For example, if lightning and thunder scare you, talk about the storm with your baby. Watch the lightning in the sky. Count the time between the lightning and the thunder. If you know that the thunder is coming, it can seem less scary.

Make Teeth Cleaning Fun

At 10 months of age, babies are too young to clean their own teeth. But you can start now to make teeth cleaning a lifelong daily habit. Your baby learns most from watching you. Set a good example by brushing your own teeth after every meal. Let your baby see you doing it. Then clean your baby's teeth by using a wet, clean, soft washcloth to remove germs. Do this after every meal. Save toothpaste until your baby is older.

Make teeth cleaning fun. Make a puppet from an old, clean white sock. Draw eyes and mouth on the bottom near the toe. Pull the sock over your hand. Pretend to clean the puppet's teeth. Let your baby try. Or use a stuffed animal.

Sing a song while cleaning. Make up your own words. Or sing these words to the tune of "Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush."

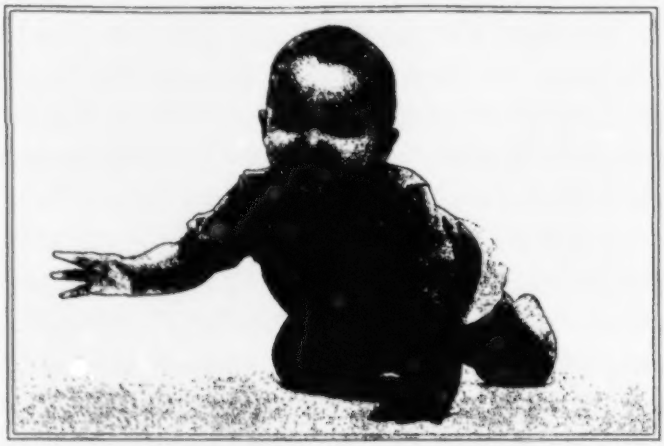
This is the way we clean our teeth, clean our teeth, clean our teeth. This is the way we clean our teeth so early in the morning. (This is the way we clean our teeth before we go to bed.)

Use teeth cleaning for learning. Point to your teeth and say, "Teeth." Ask, "Where are your teeth?" Talk about cleaning. Use words like brush, clean, tongue, top, bottom, back, front. Your baby will need to know these words when she starts cleaning her own teeth.

Make teeth cleaning a pleasant experience. That way your baby will want to try it on her own.

White spots on your baby's teeth could be a sign of decay. If you see white spots, call your dentist.

What's It Like To Be 10 Months Old?



- ☆ I don't like being away from you.
- ☆ I crawl upstairs and downstairs but always need your help to do it safely.
- ☆ I pull myself up to stand if there is sturdy furniture to hold on to.
- ☆ I sit down from a standing position with balance and self-control.
- ☆ I point to parts of my body when you ask me where they are.
- ☆ I say "no" and shake my head from side to side.
- ☆ I know when you are happy or unhappy with what I do.
- ☆ I like to imitate people, gestures and sounds.
- ☆ I practice saying words. Sometimes you can understand what I'm saying.
- ☆ I have favorite toys that give me comfort when I'm upset.
- ☆ I'm afraid of some loud noises, like thunder and the vacuum cleaner.
- ☆ I like to do things by myself but need you to stay close to me in case I need help.
- ☆ I have some teeth and need help cleaning them.
- ☆ I fuss when I'm tired. Sometimes it's hard for me to fall asleep.
- ☆ I rely on you to understand what my different cries and sounds mean.
- ☆ I like trying new foods that I can feed myself.

Learning Through Play

Your baby is unique. No one else is exactly like her! She learns at her own pace. She has specific likes and dislikes. She has a personality that is hers alone.

Your baby does share some traits with other 10-month-olds. Almost all babies will benefit from the following suggestions:

Talk to your baby. You can tell that she understands many of your words and expressions. Encourage her to imitate you.

Keep your baby interested. Doing the same things over and over is important to building some skills. But don't let it get boring. Sing new songs. Tell new stories. Look at new pictures. Play new games.

Show your baby that you are proud of her. Clap and smile when she does something new. Say, for example, "Nita, you did that all by yourself. What a big girl!"

Read to your baby. Let her sit on your lap while you read a book or look at its pictures. Make reading a part of your bedtime ritual. Soon your daughter will be reading to you!

Keep your baby safe. Make sure she won't hurt herself as she explores the things in her home.

Early Intervention and Your Baby's Developing Skills

Children learn skills as they grow. These skills happen by certain ages. A child learns skills at her own pace. You can see how your baby is doing. Watch when she starts to crawl, walk, talk and feed herself.

If you are concerned that your baby is learning skills too slowly, talk to your doctor. You can also call 1-800-695-0285 to get information. The call is free. When you call, you will be told how to contact the early intervention program in your state. Staff of your state's early intervention program can assist you in finding help in your state.

What is an early intervention program?

An early intervention program helps children from birth to age three. Early intervention staff can help your baby learn to roll over, sit up, crawl and grasp toys.

They also help children who are having problems seeing, hearing and talking.

How does an early intervention program help?

It can help your child with needed services and also help you join a support group.

Your family and early intervention staff can work together to plan services. These services teach basic skills and can be done in your home or during child care.

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Games for Skill Building

Have fun helping your baby develop these skills.

Physical skills: Your baby loves to imitate you. Get on the floor and crawl with your baby. Play "Follow the Leader." Sit on the floor with her and let her copy your emotions. For example, bang on an empty box with a wooden spoon. Give the spoon to your baby and help her to bang too.

Emotional skills: Help your baby feel pride in what she does. Talk to her all through the day. Tell her she is growing strong. Tell her she is smart or kind. For example, Alma crawls toward the telephone when she hears it ring. Say, "Wow, you know that the phone is ringing. You go right to it."

Intellectual skills: Help your baby learn about sizes. Give her two or three empty boxes. Talk about the biggest, smallest, tallest, widest, longest and shortest box.

Social skills: Show your baby how to touch gently. When she grabs your hair, for example, say in a calm voice, "That hurts me. Hold your hand like this and pat Mommy's hair gently." While you say the words, hold your baby's hand open. Hold it while you slowly pat and smooth your head.

Language skills: Play lots of echo games. Call out sounds like la, la, la or ba, ba, ba. Encourage your baby to repeat the sounds. If she makes sounds, echo her. This will get her ready for saying real words.

Educational Toys?

Sometimes parents feel that they need to buy expensive educational toys for their babies. Don't be fooled by fancy words and packages. Almost anything your baby can play with safely is something she can learn from.

Your baby learns through her senses—her eyes, nose, mouth, fingers and ears. Try to provide hand-made toys that stimulate all of her senses. The toys below take only a few minutes to make, and they are free! Throw them away when your baby outgrows them or they become ragged. Keep your baby safe.

Noisemakers: Gather a few things that make noise. You might choose a rattle, an unopened box of rice, a large whistle and an alarm clock. As you sit with your baby, shake the rattle. Talk about the sound. Compare it to the sound rice makes when you shake the box. Gently blow the whistle. Then turn the alarm clock on and off. Talk about the different sounds.

Check tiny toys for safe size: Use the cardboard tube from a toilet paper roll to judge the safety of a toy. If the toy passes through the tube, it's too small for your baby to play with safely.

Smelling fragrances: Gather a variety of objects with interesting smells like soap, mint, candles or creams. Put a small amount in your hand or on your finger. Hold it to your baby's nose and talk about the smell. "This is soap. We take a bath with it. Do you like it?"

Feeling the outdoors: Take your baby outdoors. Let her sit on a blanket on the grass. Stay close and keep your arms around her. Let her touch the grass. Talk to her about how it feels—wet, dry, smooth, prickly. Move her to a sand pile, sidewalk or park bench. Again, let her touch the surface. Use words like warm, cold, rough, smooth, bumpy and hard.

Looking at animals: Tear out several large pictures of animals from old magazines. Look at the pictures with your baby. Point to the animal. Tell the baby about the animal. Make a noise that sounds like that animal. For example, show a picture of a sheep. Say, "Here's the sheep's head. It has soft wool all over its body. A sheep says 'Baaah.'"

Security Comfort Objects—Loveys

It can be a blanket, a stuffed toy or a silky rag. In any form, it offers your baby comfort and security. It is a substitute you—faithful, loving and accepting.

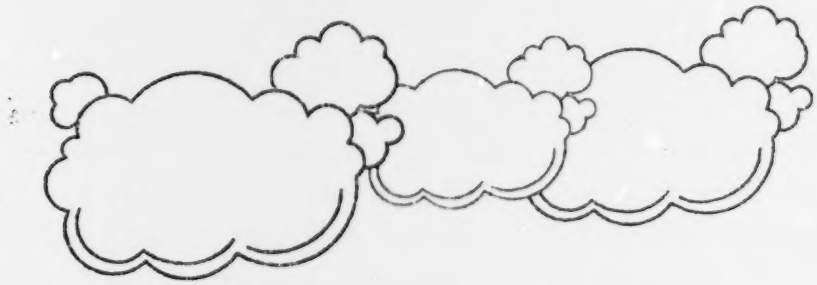
Security comfort objects are sometimes called loveys, blankeys or other made-up names. Usually babies between nine and 12 months choose their loveys. Once chosen, the lovey may be a part of the family for years to come.

Loveys are not a sign of weakness. Instead, they help your baby learn about being apart from you. With a lovey, your baby can control her own comfort. It can help her find comfort anywhere, even if you aren't there. It will help her go to sleep when she's tired. It will reassure her when she's away from you. It will comfort her when she's scared or upset. It will help her remember the security of home when she's in a strange place.

Think of a lovey as a symbol for you. It allows your baby to think, "I can't have my mommy or daddy right now. I have this instead. It reminds me of my mommy and daddy. It helps me remember that they love and care for me."

Use these tips

- ☆ Encourage your baby to choose a lovey. Offer the same object whenever she is upset or needs comfort.
- ☆ Develop a bedtime ritual. Remember to include the lovey. For example, say "Let's get Binkey. It's time for bed now."
- ☆ Don't hide or deny the use of a lovey. Never use it as a reward or punishment.
- ☆ Show your baby where to keep the lovey when it's not being used.



Safety First—at Every Age

Always remember

- ☆ Buckle your baby into a car safety seat before you start the car. Keep the seat facing backward until your baby is one year old and weighs at least 20 pounds. The back seat is the safest place for babies and children.
- ☆ Stay with your baby when she is playing near or in water. Never leave your baby alone in a bath or a pool. Babies can drown in just a few inches of water.
- ☆ Never, ever shake your baby.
- ☆ Keep your baby away from things that could burn her. Don't eat, drink, smoke or carry anything hot while holding her.
- ☆ Put your baby to sleep on her back unless your doctor has told you to do otherwise. Insist that others who care for your baby do the same.
- ☆ Serve healthy foods. Avoid sweetened, salty or fatty ones.
- ☆ Lock up guns, alcohol, drugs and chemicals such as cleaning solutions. These can kill your baby.
- ☆ Put away knives, matches and other items that can hurt your baby. Put them in a place your exploring baby can't reach or open.

Never Shake Your Baby

Sometimes when a baby cries, a parent will shake the baby. The parent may think that shaking is not as bad as hitting or spanking. Some parents handle a baby too roughly in play.

Never shake a baby. Babies have large heads and weak neck muscles. Brain tissue is very fragile. Sudden motion can damage brain cells. When an adult shakes a baby in anger, the force may be five to 10 times stronger than if the child had fallen.

The damage can kill or disable a child. Shaken babies can become blind or deaf. They can develop cerebral palsy or seizures. They can be left with severe learning or behavior problems.

Avoid rough play, even though your baby seems to like it. Avoid any kind of rough or sudden movement.

- ☆ Don't jog or jump with your baby on your back or shoulders.
- ☆ Don't throw your baby into the air.
- ☆ Don't spin your baby around.
- ☆ Don't swing your baby around by a leg and arm or by the ankles.

Explain this danger to everyone who cares for your baby. Older children, neighbors, grandparents and others need to follow this rule.

If you get angry at your baby, stop what you're doing. Put your baby in a safe place. Take 10 deep breaths. Call a friend. Write down your feelings. When you feel calm again, go back to your baby. Whisper soothing words. Gently stroke your baby's back. Pick up your baby and walk. Rock in a rocking chair.

Guidance and Discipline

Your baby has a need to explore. It's how she learns about her world and the things in it. Sometimes though, this need can get her into trouble. She wants to touch, taste and hold everything—even dangerous or delicate things. You have to set limits for your baby. You want her to explore. But you can't let her hurt herself or damage things in your home.

For example, your baby has watched you pot a new plant. You've talked with her about the delicate leaves and the dark soil. She watched as you watered the plant and put it on a shelf by the window. But now your baby wants to explore it. She crawls to the shelf and pulls herself up. She is ready to topple the plant. What do you do?

One thing you can do is move the plant. Put it in a place where your baby can see it but not pull it over. This is childproofing. Your baby is more mobile than ever. Move delicate and dangerous things out of the way of your exploring baby.

Another thing to do is distract your baby. She has a short attention span.

Her memory is short, too. This lets you distract her from an activity. Pick up your baby and show her a new toy. You don't have to say "No" or fuss about the mess she could have made. Saying "No" too often makes the word less effective.

Pulling on an electrical cord is a real danger. This time, say "No" firmly. Then distract her. Also think of ways to hide the cord so she can't play with it. It's never OK to play with electrical cords.

You can help your baby remember and follow your directions. Always respond quickly. And always respond consistently. Use the same words every time. For example, say "No, that is dangerous. It is not to play with."

Expect your baby to explore. But she has a short memory. And she won't remember your directions easily. Respond quickly to dangerous behavior. However, it's important not to become angry with your baby. She needs your help to learn about what's dangerous. Respond the same way all the time.

When You Feel Bad

All parents have days when they feel bad. Lots of things can go wrong. Your baby may be sick. You may feel tired after school or work. You may wish you weren't tied down to a baby. You may feel scared about paying your bills.

Everybody feels bad sometimes. Learning to cope with these feelings is part of living a healthy life.

If you feel so bad that you might hurt your baby, stop what you're doing. Put your baby in a safe place. Leave the room for a few minutes. Take 10 deep breaths. Then take 10 more.

If you feel like hurting your baby, call Parents Anonymous at 1-800-554-2323. This group is made up of parents just like you. They will listen. They can help you find ways to cope with your feelings. They can help keep you from hurting your baby.

Sometimes moms and dads take out their feelings on each other. It often starts with hurtful words. Over time it may grow into hurtful actions like hitting. Hitting just makes things worse. Yelling and fighting scares your baby.

Learn to talk things out. Say, "Let's change the way we argue. Let's talk instead of hit." Avoid blaming your partner when something goes wrong. If you think you might yell or hit, leave the room for a few minutes. Come back when you have settled down.

Some men take advantage of their bigger size and hit their partners. The man may force the woman to keep it secret. Or he may threaten to take away the baby. The woman may feel that she is to blame. And she may feel too scared to tell anyone. If this is happening to you, call 1-800-799-SAFE (7233). This is the National Domestic Violence Hotline. They will listen. They will help you make a safety plan. They will help you figure out what to do.

If you're afraid your partner will hurt you or the baby, call 9-1-1 right away. No one deserves to be hurt. You need to feel safe in your own home.

Abuse hotlines

If you know about a child who is being abused, call the child abuse hotline. Your name will be kept confidential. The incident will be investigated.

Child abuse hotline 1-800-422-4453

If you know a woman who is being abused by her partner, suggest that she call the domestic violence hotline. She may remain anonymous, if she wishes. She will learn how to get help.

Domestic violence hotline 1-800-799-SAFE

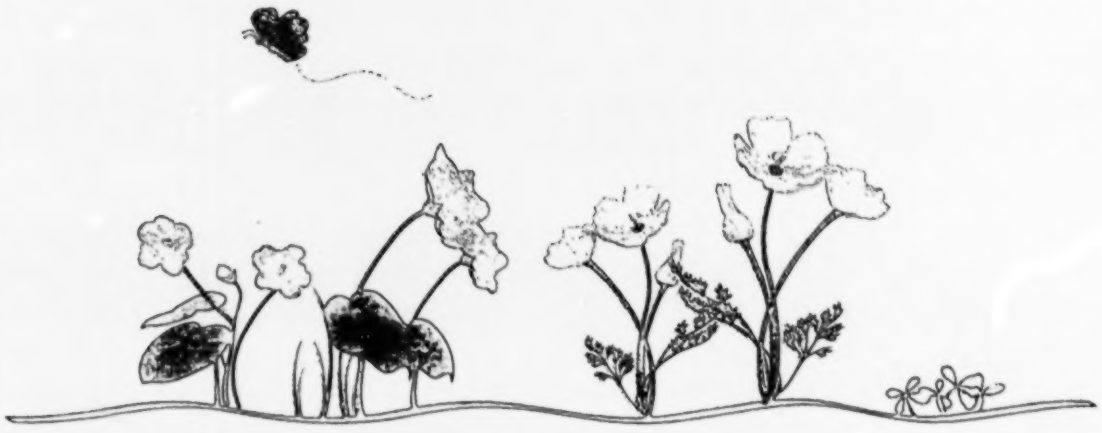
Information Resources for Families

Families who are enrolled in the WIC program (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children) can get information on breastfeeding, formula feeding and nutrition at their local WIC office. Families eligible for WIC receive nutrition counseling and supplemental foods such as baby formula, milk and cereal. To find the WIC office nearest you, call your state health department or visit the WIC Web site at www.fns.usda.gov/wic/. Many public libraries offer free access to the Internet and provide help for first-time users.

For information about early childhood education initiatives, you may contact the U.S. Department of Education at 1-800-USA-LEARN or visit the Web site at www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/teachingouryoungest/.

To learn about child care options, you may contact the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Child Care Aware by phone at 1-800-424-2246 or visit their Web site at www.childcareaware.org/.

For more information and resources on postpartum depression, breastfeeding and many other women's health issues call The National Women's Health Information Center (NWHIC) at 1-800-994-9662 (1-800-994-WOMAN). You can visit their Web site at www.4woman.org/.



To learn more about breastfeeding, you may call La Leche League at 1-800-LALECHE or visit their Web site at www.lalecheleague.org/.

To learn more about free or low-cost health insurance for children, you can call the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Insure Kids Now program at 1-877-KIDSNOW. You can also visit their Web site at www.insurekidsnow.gov/.

The American Association of Poison Control Centers' (AAPCC) poison control hotline, 1-800-222-1222, should be on your list of emergency numbers. To learn more, you can visit the AAPCC Web site at www.aapcc.org/.

Families who cannot afford a car safety seat can contact the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. They can provide information on resources that help low-income families purchase or borrow child car seats. You may call them at 1-800-424-9393 or visit their Web site at www.nhtsa.dot.gov/.

To learn more about safety, you can call the Consumer Product Safety Commission at 1-800-638-2772 or you can visit their Web site at www.cpsc.gov/.

For information on disabilities and disability-related issues for families, you can call the National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY) at 1-800-695-0285 or visit their Web site at www.nichcy.org/.

For information about programs that teach adults how to read, you can call America's Literacy Directory at 1-800-228-8813 or visit their Web site at: www.literacydirectory.org/.

Coming Next Month

Prepare To Visit the Dentist

Separation Anxiety

Building Skills Through Play

Managing Your Time

...and much more!

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